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ABSTRACT

Educators from European countries were presented with up-to-date information about Africa. The seminar was intended to help teachers present the African experience as cogently as possible in their classrooms. The main topics of the seminar are discussed, papers are summarized, discussions of the working groups are presented, participants' reactions to the seminar are discussed, and recommendations are listed. Papers deal with a variety of topics, including European attitudes toward Africa, the image of Africa in textbooks, the use of film for teaching about Africa, the development of national languages in Africa, the need to recognize the contribution of African art to world culture, the need for planners to listen to the views of African villagers, and Africa and the international community. Working groups examined the historical, cultural, and ecological approaches to studying Africa. Participants reacted very favorably to the seminar. It was recommended that children be made aware of African lands, and that the myths and stereotypes be dispelled. Appendices contain a participant list and addresses of centers providing resources on Africa. (RM)

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European Teachers Seminar on "Teaching about Africa south of the Sahara"

Lahti (Finland), 5-10 August 1984

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Report

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COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

STRASBOURG
1985

Strasbourg 27 February 1985 DECS/EGT (85) 15

COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

Report on the European Teachers Seminar

TEACHING ABOUT AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

Lahti, Finland

5-10 August 1984

Report written and compiled by

Elizabeth Gunner

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1. INTRODUCTION

"... and Africa gigantically caterpillaring as far as the Spanish foot of Europe: the nakedness of Africa where the scythe of Death swings wide ..."
from "Return to My Native Land", Aimé Césaire

"Somehow we know the carnival days
cannot be gone so soon
We may gather again those
unfinished harvests of our soul."

from "A Harvest of our Dreams", Kofi Anyidoho.

This boldly and imaginatively conceived Seminar on "Teaching about Africa South of the Sahara" was sponsored by the Council of Europe in conjunction with the Finnish Ministry of Education. The essential aim was to present the participants from member countries of the Council of Europe with a range of up-to-date information on Africa. The intention, though, was to do a great deal more than present information. It was also to provide a forum for the understanding of "process" as well as "product", a forum too, for the careful exploration of ideas and attitudes relating to the continent which is still so often in the West called "the dark continent".

Africa has been called "the poorest continent". Also it is the continent of "the wretched of the earth" - with famine and death at this time striking more of its inhabitants than at any other known momemt in its history. But, besides these stark truths, Africa is also a continent with much to offer the rest of mankind through the riches of its manifold art forms and its deeply humane social philosophy. As a continent, it has been deeply involved with Europe through the agonies of the slave trade, and through colonialism; that the cycle of "dependency and exploitation" is by no means ended was a point made by several speakers during the Seminar.

Our task at the Lahti Seminar was to attempt to come to grips with the complexity of Africa, to understand this outside and beyond the constraints of our own particular subject disciplines. With this wider understanding and with additional expertise in using African material effectively and truthfully in our own subjects, it was hoped that we would be in a strong position to present the African case and the African experience as cogently as possible in the education system of our own countries.

Two major themes which emerged from the lectures and discussions during the Seminar concerned, firstly, the widespread nature of Western prejudice concerning the African image and African peoples and societies. Secondly, the Seminar constantly emphasised the role of ordinary people both in shaping African history and in contemporary African society.

2. OPENING REMARKS BY THE SEMINAR DIRECTOR

The Seminar was opened by its Director, Ms Kirsti Wartiovaara. On behalf of the Finnish Ministry of Education and the Council of Europe, Ms Wartiovaara welcomed us all and reminded us that representatives from fifteen countries were present for our Seminar on "Teaching about Africa South of the Sahara". She remarked that the promotion of international understanding was important particularly at times of global tension. She considered teachers to be a

significant factor in the internationalisation of education because through promoting understanding the possibilities of solving and resolving international tensions were much greater. There was a need, she said, for multi-lateral, bi-lateral and global understanding and teachers were vitally placed to assist in bringing this about. The Council of Europe provided an excellent forum for the promotion of such understanding.

Dr. Sonja Servomaa, Director of the Päijät-Häme Summer University at Lahti and one of the organisers of the Seminar, added her words of welcome and stressed the importance of keeping teachers up-to-date in topics such as the extremely wide one on which we were about to embark. She referred too, to what she called "the deep view of African life", its philosophy and its art forms, a grasp of this aspect was as important as an awareness of contemporary social, economic and political developments. Mr Yinka Williams, of the University of Helsinki added the African voice of welcome and focused briefly on the need to design clear objectives in approaching the question of teaching African history, culture and ecology. Then each participant spoke a few words about him or herself, and our African journey was underway. Skilfully guiding our journey, I should add, was our excellent Secretary of the Seminar, Mr Ari Serkolla of the University of Helsinki's Institute of Development Studies.

3. THE MAIN TOPICS OF THE SEMINAR AND SUMMARIES OF PAPERS GIVEN

The programme of the Seminar consisted firstly of a number of lectures grouped around four main topics, and secondly of group work aimed at increasing participants' knowledge in a particular area. Also of importance in the group work was the consideration of the most effective pedagogic methods teachers should use. In the group sessions, papers were presented and were followed by intensive, wide-ranging discussions of how best to communicate basic concepts and information in schools and colleges. In some cases I have included in the following sections papers which were given in group work sessions but which touch closely on the main themes of the general lectures.

3.1 THE IMAGE OF AFRICA AND THE CLASSROOM

Three papers in this section covered general attitudes to Africa and African peoples which were felt to be prevalent in Europe, and two speakers looked specifically at the image of Africa as it appeared in school textbooks. Another paper explored the use of film as a resource for teaching about Africa, and the final paper tackled the somewhat controversial subject of development education and its role in Britain in particular.

3.1.1 "Africa in the mind: myth and reality" Elizabeth Gunner

This paper outlined the negative stereotypes of Africa which the speaker felt still existed in Europe which affected the way in which Africa was presented - if it was presented at all - in the classroom. Firstly, there was the myth of African inferiority, one which seemed to have developed in Europe in the Eighteenth Century and which gained ground in the Nineteenth Century. The main source of this cumulative prejudice was felt to be the centuries long involvement of several European nations - the British, French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese - in the African slave trade.

Negative and erroneous images of Africa also extended to African history. Africa was frequently thought of as having had no history until it was "discovered" by various Europeans, men such as Vasco da Gama, Diaz and later, Englishmen such as Stanley and Livingstone. The speaker pointed out that, in fact, there were substantial kingdoms in the Western Sudan (West Africa), namely Ghana, Mali and Songhai; there was also the far-reaching kingdom of Great Zimbabwe in south-east Africa in the Fifteenth Century. In addition to such centralised societies, other African peoples such as the Gikuyu in the East, and the Igbo in the West, had developed social structures with no strong central leadership. Such varied societies developed without European influence and, in fact, European contact (through slave trading) was not at all beneficial. Rather, it was disastrous.

Other areas of misconception related to ignorance about the range and complexity of African languages and literatures. Dictionaries of languages such as Hausa, in Nigeria, or Zulu, in South Africa, showed that many African languages could compare favourably in their word counts with European languages. Also, African languages contained many abstract terms, although these often covered concepts that were very different from those common to European languages. Oral and written literatures, for instance the West African Mandinka epic of "Sunjata", and the works of writers in English such as Ngugi and Soyinka showed the strength of the spoken, the sung, and the written word.

There were also "counter-myths", such as the romantic, literary-political movement known as "negritude", initiated by Senghor and Cesaire in Paris in the late 1920s; also, if the cultures and identity of black minorities in countries such as Britain were not recognised, they too would produce "counter-myths" of Africa.

There was also the need to understand, rather than regard as "fetishism", the basis of African spiritual beliefs: the idea of a dynamic universe, a "philosophy of forces", with many different powers under the supreme one. The paper ended by asking whether "progress" for Africa need automatically follow the model provided by the highly competitive, consumer-oriented societies of the West, with their often dispensable technological gadgetry. What educators had to do was to seek to elucidate the often changing realities of the continent and to substitute these for the negative African myths still current in the West.

3.1.2 Africa in school textbooks - Are all prejudices gone? Mai Palmberg

This stimulating paper was based on a study of books on English language, religious knowledge, civics, history and geography used at the senior level of the Swedish comprehensive school, namely Levels 7-9. The speaker defined prejudice as the construction of typologies; one or a few traits are taken to infer a number of other characteristics as well. She further defined prejudice as a persistent cluster of negative generalisations. The prejudice that had so powerfully coloured teaching about Africa was part of a powerful ideology, reinforcing and perpetuating the power relationship between the capitalist West and the Third World. One needed also to consider the implicit Western notion of development, which was unilinear, evolutionist and ethnocentric, ie all societies were assumed to pass through a series of steps of development and societies seen to be at a lower stage of development were considered inferior. Mai Palmberg considered this evolutionist theory to be at the centre of Western thinking about themselves and the world.

What "old" prejudices were still to be found in new textbooks? The old assumption of innate inferiority was almost gone. The idea of "the savage", which could be traced back to the Hobbesian view of society, still appeared: textbooks focused on the Congo crisis of the early 1960s; the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70, the war in Angola of 1975-6 and saw them in terms of ethnic fights. Textbooks did not include opposite examples of remarkable unity in the face of great difficulties, for example the Organisation of African Unity, efforts at economic co-operation such as ECOWAS, and cultural manifestations of co-operation such as the 1977 FESTAC held in Nigeria.

On the notion of "underdevelopment as backwardness", the general reappraisal of the term had not yet figured in school textbooks; the consensus in the Nordic countries, that underdevelopment in the Third World was caused by dependence on the developed countries, whose financial interests exploited resources and deformed economies, was not evident in textbooks. Instead, the evolutionist theory was still in evidence. Another "old prejudice" consistently portrayed the white man as civiliser with little mention of negative aspects such as the slave trade. Now the slave trade was dealt with, but African culture and religion were still neglected and there was little mention of colonial cruelties. For instance there was no mention of the 10 million Congolese who died in the period of rubber exploitation in the Congo. On the whole though, there was some small improvement on the old "civiliser" image.

The old view of exotic Africa - "wild animals are more interesting than Africans" - was felt to be much in evidence. Countering the "safari" image of Africa were some books in English which were seen as pioneers in bringing the African voice into the classroom and presenting writers such as Ngugi, Soyinka and La Guma.

What of the new prejudices? Firstly, there was the idea that the cure for Third World misery was Western development assistance and the adoption of Western techniques. What this notion did not recognise was the political element in underdevelopment, which was seen not as a system of exploitative relationships but simply as "we the rich" and "they the poor". In other words, it was seen as a moral and not a political question. Secondly, there was the image of "Africans as victim", and the emphasis on the need to feel pity for Africans. This made positive identification very difficult. In the South African case too, Africans were consistently seen as victims. Sharpeville and Soweto were mentioned, but there was no mention of the African National Congress, although it was a recipient of assistance from the Swedish state. Here too, an emphasis on pity made it impossible to establish a feeling of solidarity or to build the capacity for identification. African literature, with its directness and its dramatisation of the varieties of African experience had a role to play in counteracting the "victim" image.

In conclusion, there was at present a better presentation of Africa in Swedish textbooks, although elements of ethnocentrism and the emphasis on underdevelopment still remained. But, even if there were positive changes in school textbooks, this alone was not enough. There was a great need for teacher training, and a constant need to recognise prejudice and its capacity to create negative images.

3.1.3 "Africa as presented in geography textbooks of Western European countries" Elfriede Hillers

The question of bias, and the selective and ethnocentric treatment of Africa was also discussed by Elfriede Hillers. Her analysis was based on a study of 250 geography textbooks for the 11-15 age-range, used in Belgium, England and Wales, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and the Netherlands.

Her analysis showed that the following topics tended to be emphasised in the presentation of Africa south of the Sahara: economic types; forms of settlement; colonial history; problems of development with an emphasis on technological projects, and development aid. There was an insufficient coverage of cultural change, the history and development of social structures, religion and art.

As to the actual portrayals of Africa, Dr. Hiller's study showed that many books contained factual errors regarding the names of tribes and places. They also contained outdated portrayals which took no account of items such as African towns, migrations, cultural change and nation-building. Also, portrayals often did not reflect the actual state of scholarly discussion. This applied to countries where there was not close co-operation between ethnology and geography at university or in teacher-training. Some material in books was often of no scientific standard, photographs tended not to be integrated into the text, and finally, the selection of topics was often one-sided, being made only from an economic-technological point of view.

On the subject of bias in textbooks, the speaker saw evidence of Euro-centred views and bias both in the topics selected and in the emphasis placed on topics. She noted a marked "ingroup-outgroup" constellation; the "outgroup", ie the non-European countries were felt to be exotic, strange, even dangerous. The evolutionist way of thinking was also marked, and found expression in the polarisation of the topics "development" and "under-development". An example of the "ingroup-outgroup" approach was the emphasis on "dark Africa" - a world of fear, with African religion portrayed as a belief in ghosts and witches. An example of the "development-under-development" approach was the following quotation:

> "In the West (of Nigeria) the Yoruba founded big cities, which can, however, not be compared to our towns".

Analysis of the most recent textbooks showed that the main problem was no longer the presentation of false factual information and hostile images, but that of one-sided, negative portrayals. Such incomplete portrayals did nothing to promote perception and appreciation of foreign peoples and cultures.

Dr. Hillers concluded that, in general, the textbooks of Western European countries showed a deficiency of knowledge and a lack of objective appreciation of non-European peoples and cultures in Africa south of the Sahara. Her recommendations included the following;

- the cultural dimension must be taken into account and the cultural achievements of people must be appreciated;
- the interdependencies of underdeveloped areas and industrialised nations should be explained more clearly;
- teachers and writers of textbooks must make more use of recent findings in the field of ethnology and cultural anthropology;

- educators should design teaching units and teaching material so that they impart a global view of peoples and their culture;

- authors must seek the advice of colleagues from non-European countries when preparing the contents of textbooks.

3.1.4 Film as a resource for teaching Jeremy Gould

Film is an important means of allowing Africa to speak for itself. This was the message of Jeremy Gould's paper. He pointed out that film could be used by teachers to corroborate or contextualise discussion of an event or a topic. It could show what Africans are like and so "concretise" statements. It helped in teachers' efforts to show the viewpoints of people very different from oneself. The knowledge thus acquired could provide a means of re-assessing Western values; concepts such as "modernity", "civilisation", "development", "efficiency" could be evaluated more realistically once the values and viewpoints of the Third World were clear. It was time that the Third World was presented to the West, instead of the West's voice alone being heard.

The speaker emphasised that the efficient use of film in teaching must involve careful preparation of the material with the viewers, and of course complete technical competence. He then outlined two main types of African films:

i. feature-narrative films by African film-makers;

ii. new wave anthropological films.

Of the feature films, most were from francophone countries, and the best known producers were from Senegal, for instance, Sembene Ousmane, and the anthropologist, actress turned film-maker, Safi Faye.

Of the new wave anthropological film-makers, the most successful were Jean Rouch, and John Marshall, whose films aimed to present San life from within their own society in the Kalahari. John Marshall's film, "Bitter Melons", was shown after the paper. It portrayed, among other things, the role of the songmaker and musician among the San, their reliance on bitter melons as a supply of water in the driest months, and their treatment of the elderly. The latter point highlighted, in quite a controversial way, the differing morality of different societies and the film did provoke some sharp comment. One speaker said he would not show it to students because it would reinforce stereotypes of Africa as a place of "naked and backward people". Jeremy Gould replied that such films always worked best when shown in conjunction with background information on the people and the environment, their history and their means of livelihood. Certainly after this session, no-one was left in any doubt as to the power of film as a medium. Nevertheless, what was also clear was the crucial role of the teacher in adequate preparation before viewing and cogent analysis after a showing of a film.

3.1.5 The importance of development education David Marsden

This provocative paper aimed to show how Development Studies in the United Kingdom had a key role to play in breaking down the insular mentality of the British public and their consequently narrow interpretation of the world. David Marsden argued that development education must, before all else,

encourage the comparative knowledge of others' values. It must create awareness of the cultural, economic and political differences which separate and unite peoples. It aimed to show the inter-connectedness of these problems both at a national and international level. Also, it was essential to develop a historical understanding of how things have come to be as they are.

Development Studies was far more than a subject which only gathered and imparted information. Rather, it laid stress on the need to focus on the processes of development (and underdevelopment). For instance, in the case of a particular disease, one must consider not only the means of eradication but how the disease arose in the first place. Of particular importance was the study of the processes of impoverishment and enrichment.

The task of development was to facilitate people's abilities to make informed choices through a richer interpretation of the world they encountered. Application of knowledge was more important than accumulating it. It was necessary, he argued, to put competing explanations before students. For instance: "The poor are poor through their own fault", "The poor are poor because of the rich". The differing conclusions reached, stress, in the first instance one's moral responsibility to help those who are worse off, the second conclusion points to relations of exploitation both within and between nations.

The speaker stated that study of the developing world is not a matter of "us" and "them" because "the developing world provides a mirror in which are reflected our own circumstances". He stressed that development education was in many ways breaking new ground because of its new methodologies. Even though it might lack resources as a separate area of the curriculum, this was not a major problem. Good teachers would make excellent use of poor resources, and bad teachers would make poor use of even the best resources. Old textbooks, reflecting out of date attitudes had their own uses in the hands of an able teacher. Also, newspapers, television clips, industries, council minutes and so on were rich resource areas. They provided excellent training in developing skills which enabled pupils to deal with current circumstances.

Development education had a key role in setting out "to confront stereotyped images of the world; to challenge and expose existing attitudes which perpetuate prejudice and intolerance". David Marsden stressed the interconnectedness of studying Africa and studying our own society: "Looking at events in remote and unfamiliar parts of the world is merely a means to a greater understanding of our own world and of our own place in it".

3.2 AFRICA: HISTORY AND CULTURE

The papers in this section cover aspects of history and culture. The first, by Dr. Sivonen, outlines the differing approaches to African history, the second, by Professor Ranger takes a hard look at the options of historical interpretation faced by a newly independent state, in this case, Zimbabwe. Two further papers, by Dr. Knappert and Dr. Gunner discuss problems relating to the development of national languages in Africa, and the clash of cultures at the village level. The need to recognise the unique contribution of African art to world culture was stressed by Yinka Williams in his illustrated lecture on African art.

3.2.1 Interpretations of African history Seppo Sivonen

Seppo Sivonen reminded participants that in order to fully understand various historical interpretations one must also look at the motives of those making the interpretations. He gave examples: in the 1930s Europeanised Africans from the Gold Coast who were "sensitive ... about any course of study designed specifically for Africans", insisted on "World History". On the other hand, some Nigerians who were followers of Islam had maintained their national pride during decades of colonialism and were truely interested in their African background.

The speaker then turned to the most common traditions of African historiography and the motives influencing them. As far back as 1831 Hegel had set the scene for a narrow interpretation of African history. Africa, Hegel had said, was to be understood as "an ahistoric, underdeveloped spirit". Nineteenth Century reports of white pioneers were strongly influenced by social Darwinism and the racial doctrines of the period. Later in the century there was an emphasis on sources, but no African sources were used. Anthropologists in the early Twentieth Century, and post-World War 1 were anti-historical in their relations to African cultures.

A new development between the two World Wars was the interest of African scholars in local traditions and oral tradition. This led to the nationalistic trend in African historical research which followed the Second World War. In the 1960s, with the independence of a number of African states, the nationalist or Afrocentric school established itself strongly. The Belgian scholar, Jan Vansina, emphasised the use of oral tradition in the 1960s, and historians began with this new methodology to make use also of the methods of archaelogical, linguistic and anthropological research. Historians had, thus, moved to a far wider time span in their analysis of African history, and colonialism could be seen as occupying a very short period of African history. Another development was the study of the historical dimensions of poverty, famine, disease and illiteracy.

Seppo Sivonen referred to the Colonialist School of historians, who argued that, on balance, colonialism had been of benefit to Africa; opposed to this view were the historians of the Radical School, who were often Marxist. These stressed the need for internal analysis of African pre-colonial societal forms. In this way, the contrasts in the social structures of African societies could be explained.

Turning to an example of the way interpretation of African history had shifted in recent years, the speaker referred to Tanzanian historiography: a 1980 collection of essays had criticised the nationalistic work done in the 1960s. Research at present focused firstly on the interaction between individuals and societies, and secondly on the interaction between man and nature. Finally, there was the need to look at problematics at the local level, and equally important was the structural analysis of the international political and economic system.

3.2.2 Socialism or cultural nationalism: Changing the school syllabus in Zimbabwe Terence Ranger

How ought history to be taught in Zimbabwean schools in the post-colonial period? Terence Ranger pointed out that, in the short period between 1980-83, enormous effort had gone into educational expansion in Zimbabwe. However, there was not as yet much change in the curriculum. The Minister for Education

and Culture, Dzingai Mutumbuka, had spoken in 1982 of the need for curricula to be "imbued with socialism and float in a film of socialism". The importance of national culture had also been stressed by political leaders. But how could both these objectives be achieved? So far, the necessary interaction between socialism and national culture had not been made clear. How was this to be achieved in the teaching of history in schools?

The emphasis on the increased scale of history teaching had not been accompanied by careful enough consideration of content. Eager publishers were rushing out new texts, hoping that theirs would be the "nationally accepted textbook". On the whole, though, there was still not much written about ordinary people. Also, the new textbooks tended to stress cultural nationalism: before textbooks had been only about white people, now they were only about black people. This approach meant that there was no investigation of the structures of the old order. These structures needed to be shown and to be critically examined, because they were often still present. Also, the new black history in the new textbooks tended to be a "top people's history"; there were no books that showed what it was like to be a miner, or a peasant farmer, in other words, there was no people's history.

Narrowly nationalist historians should also be treated with great suspicion. Writers such as Chigwedere put forward as fact, what was far from proven about the Shona origin of Great Zimbabwe. There was also the danger an almost exclusive emphasis on Shona history and a neglect of the Ndebele. Such an emphasis tended to place the Ndebele outside the political and national framework. Although such narrowly nationalist histories were not backed by anyone in government, they still needed to be publicly criticised.

Professor Ranger then turned to what he called "the sense of history at the village level". He drew on evidence from his own work in 1980-81 in the Makoni district between Harare and Umtali. At the local, village level, there was a fusion of four layers of consciousness of history: there were the official versions of chiefs' genealogies, elderly people's memories of chiefs, their own memories and understanding of their own lives, and finally, the new, radical consciousness of their right to the land, instilled by the guerilla fighters during the war.

There must be an interaction between this fused radical history, perceived at the local level, and the struggle between cultural nationalism and socialism that was taking place at the top level. There was a danger that what would emerge would be a socialist history with no room for myth or understanding. One must ensure that there was a dialogue between the local view and the national view, and that the people's understanding of their history was accepted and listened to.

3.2.3 "The significance of language in the development of national culture in Africa" Jan Knappert

In his paper, Jan Knappert referred to the problems caused by the fact that national boundaries did not coincide with ethnic boundaries. He then related this to the language question.

In the pre-colonial period, Arabic had been the only major language of the continent. It had extended over a vast area from Egypt to Mauritania and had been spoken by many millions as a first or second language. Arabic had also been used as the language for all written records in many parts of West Africa.

The diversity of languages in Africa was a central linguistic feature of the continent. Dr. Knappert said that no country in Africa spoke only one language, although in some countries, such as Botswana and Somalia, one language was dominant. Even when there were a small number of major languages in a country, it was often the case that they were not related. The three major languages of Nigeria - Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba - were not even related, and Kenya's languages belonged to four distinct families.

Although some Africans spoke several languages, the majority spoke only their own language and perhaps knew basic words for trading purposes in another. The speaker also mentioned the fact that many people could not speak or read the metropolitian languages of Africa, namely French, English and Portuguese, whereas they could read in their own languages. However, the problem of producing books in these languages would be enormous and costly, and many African people would in any case be too poor to buy these books. One way round this, Dr. Knappert suggested, would be to produce heavily subsidised books that could be sold at low prices or even provided free of charge. In this way, the vicious cycle of poverty and ignorance could be broken.

3.2.4 The meeting of cultures as reflected at the village level
Elizabeth Gunner

The tensions generated by the meeting of cultures, formed the main theme of Elizabeth Gunner's paper. She mentioned a number of African writers who had taken the clash of cultures as themes for novels, plays or for poetry. Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart portrayed the imposition of British colonial rule in South-Eastern Nigeria at the end of the Nineteenth Century and the tragic consequences of this "clash" for the central character, Okonkwo. The Nigerian dramatist, Wole Soyinka, also covered the topic in his early play, The Lion and The Jewel, which depicts the contrast between Western and traditional Yoruba attitudes to marriage and courtship. In two long poems by the Ugandan poet, the late Okot p'Bitek, marriage also provided a backdrop against which traditional and so-called modern attitudes to life could be explored. "Song of Lawino" set out the view of the traditional wife, deserted by her flashy husband. "Song of Ocol" was the husband's rather unconvincing reply to his wife's accusations.

However, compromise and reconciliation between two very different cultures was possible. The Kenyan writer, Mugo Gatheru, had found a means of respecting the values of his own Gikuyu culture even while pursuing a western profession and western education. His autobiography, Child of Two Worlds, described his early life and his acceptance of values from two cultures.

At the village level too, people could retain the legends of their own leaders and the customs - such as initiation into adulthood - which they valued most. They could combine these with respect for the benefits of western medicine and western education. The speaker referred to her own experience of the village of Bumban in northern Sierra Leone, where people's attitudes showed this selective combining of elements of the two cultures, one of Limba, African culture, the other Western culture. Questions and comment after this session suggested that some people found reconciling different cultural demands very difficult and sometimes the strain on the individual was very great.

3.3 VILLAGE AND NATIONAL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT

The need for planners to listen to the views of villagers, and the inter-relation of village and national society, were the themes running through our papers in this section. The two papers by Marya-Liisa Swantz were given in general sessions, those by Riika Laatu and Assefa Kuru were given in the smaller group sessions. A talk, with audio-visual material, by Ms Marya-Leena Williams based on her work in Northern Nigeria, also emphasised the need for co-operation between villagers and medical personnel if health projects were to be successful.

3.3.1 Changed village society in sub-Saharan Africa Marya-Liisa Swantz

Dr. Swantz stressed that every society does not have to go through the same changes in the same sequence, if at all. She was very critical of the term "traditional", with its implications of a static, never-changing way of life. As she put it, "what is called traditional today was perhaps innovative yesterday".

Referring to Liebenow's study of the Makonde people of Tanzania, Dr. Swantz mentioned the term "development from above". This kind of development which was brought about by colonialism was often continued after independence by indigenous governments. She gave specific examples of the arbitrary nature of some instructions: in the Mbulu district of Tanzania, for instance, people were at first ordered to build "modern" houses with corrugated iron roofs. Then because of the economic depression, they were told to improve their traditional houses, keeping to the known style and usual materials. This they did, successfully carrying out improvements such as raising the height of the walls to improve ventilation. It was possible, therefore, to mingle tradition and the latest scientific developments.

It was important, also, to understand a people's cosmology if change and innovation were to be successfully introduced. Sometimes the symbolic unity expressed in, for instance the positioning and grouping of houses, was difficult to alter but not impossible. People must have the chance to work out their own forms of continuity. There were many ways in which continuity could be worked out: symbolic elements could be transferred from houses to small shrines, to figurines of clay and wood, to memorial acts. Christianity and Islam had, in some cases, served as a means by which people were able to transfer symbolic meanings to a new context. Education, when introduced within the context of symbolic continuity, was far more likely to accommodate successful change. If they completely destroyed the symbolic and religious dimensions of life, education and modern development had little chance of long term success.

Continuity, therefore, of the symbolic aspects of people's life, was an essential for successful change. Successful development depended on considering people's own logic and rationale. To treat people as ignorant, and constantly interfere in their lives from outside and above was "development folly". Dr. Swantz concluded: "The first step is to start relating 'development' to people's own aims and intentions; the second is to remove with them as many obstacles as possible which prevent the forward movement of their own initiatives".

3.3.2 Can a village develop independently? Marya-Liisa Swantz

Dr. Swantz examined, in particular, the topic of health, and asked whether, in this central aspect of village life, outside interference was harmful or useful. First one had to realise that in these days, "no village is an island". For one thing, there was inter-dependence on an economic level between village and national society. Moreover, international economic decisions affected village economy by determining the price of products. Even though peasants might try, as some writers suggested, to create the necessary space to manage their own lives, this could only be a relative independence.

But do villagers want development? Should their development efforts be allowed greater independence? Dr. Swantz pointed out that health programmes were usually well supported. But here, as much as in other areas, there was a need for a concomitant educational programme. Also, if there is a constant resistance to a programme, there must be a rationale behind this which should be investigated. Sanitation had often proved a particularly difficult issue. This was often so because inefficient social investigation had been carried out by those engaged to install items such as latrines.

The speaker was of the opinion that any observable lack of village development was due to too much outside interference rather than lack of initiative at the village level. How should one balance external and internal initiative? The only way to do so was to respond in detail to the specific need of a community. But this hardly ever happened. Development projects were usually too big to be sensitive to specific needs, and they lacked individuals who were versed in social contact and in sensitivity to people. Dr. Swantz warned that only a sensitive awareness of the needs of villagers and a recognition of the need for dialogue between planners and villagers could produce long term beneficial results.

3.3.3 The role of village self-help schemes in East Africa Riika Laatu

The self-help movement in sub-Saharan Africa had gained momentum as it became increasingly evident that programmes planned and executed from the top, seldom led to significant change at the local level. Also, Ms Laatu pointed out, self-help and mutual assistance in areas such as house building and farming were strong elements of many African cultures.

The paper concentrated discussion on self-help in 41 districts of Kenya, where, unlike Tanzania, the role of self-help was still a very active one. Thousands of Harambee self-help projects were carried out in Kenya each year, and, at the village level, Harambee projects were usually in a clear majority compared to other development projects.

Vigorous self-help at the local level was most likely to be found in communities where agriculture was the main source of livelihood. Pastoralist and urbanised communities, on the other hand, showed a distinctly lower interest in self-help projects.

Ms Laatu then turned to the question of which members of a community were likely to seize initiatives in projects and also be active in them. Women featured poorly as initiators; farmers were often important, particularly in small projects of immediate relevance such as primary schools and cattle dips. Also involved as initiators, particularly in larger and more costly projects such as high schools and village polytechnics, were teachers, politicians, businessmen and clergymen. In terms of people's contributions (ie labour,

cash and material), women were the highest contributors, particularly in health projects. Among the main beneficiaries of the self-help projects were the Harambee secondary schools. Although these were, in general, less efficient than government schools, people still supported them because of the great value they placed on education.

In conclusion, the speaker stated that self-help projects had a very wide popular basis and could be even more successfully used by peasants than they had yet been. One of their great advantages - in contrast with central government initiatives - was the amount of decision making that was possible at the local level.

3.3.4 The ecology of the Sahel area: An overview Assefa Kuru

The speaker stressed, first of all, the size of the Sahel. It included Chad, Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta, the Cape Verde Islands and Gambia. Within the Sahel, there was a significant difference of resource bases between regions and countries, and even sharp differences within countries. As to environmental differentiation, there were three main areas:

i. Sahela-Sahara with a very variable rainfall of less than 250 mm in July-September;

ii. Sahel with a variable rainfall of 250-400 mm;

iii. Sahelo-Sudan with rainfall of 450/500-550-700 mm from mid June to early October.

In the region as a whole, after political independence, an alien economic system and production relation became facts of life. Among the items produced were groundnuts, cotton and sugar cane. The traditional section of the economy was highly neglected, and the alien economic system led to no enduring enrichment for the local people. Nor was there any control or viable participation by the peasant community.

Mr Kuru traced many of the difficulties in the area to a lack of social cohesion. Also significant was the great amount of socio-political and economic uncertainty: there was military rule in four of the Sahelian countries. Social cohesion was important for these countries, and so was participation by the people.

The speaker was critical of large scale cash crop farming, which he considered to be detrimental to the peasant community and destructive to the delicately balanced natural environment. The indigenous people had previously carefully adapted to the environment by taking account of its limiting factors. For instance, there had been careful use of a local variety of the acacia tree, cattle rearing and millet production. But "the ecological integrity of the traditionally adapted system" had been eroded by the introduction of large scale farming. He considered this "sudden and accentuated technological pressure (introduced) without due consideration of the limits of the natural ecosystem" to have brought about "ecological disaster". The losers in all this were the rural community who, without having benefited from the imposed economic system, were now "exposed to the vagaries of famine".

3.4 AFRICA AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The unequal economic relations between African states and the industrialised nations was the theme of papers in this section. Economic interdependence, or as some speakers put it "dependence and exploitation" vis-à-vis Africa and the West were also mentioned during other sessions in the Seminar. The first paper summarised below was given by Dr. Jyrki Kakonen as a lecture to all participants, and the other four were given in the smaller, group sessions.

3.4.1 African states in the international order Jyrki Kakonen

The speaker examined the relations between African states and the former colonial powers after independence. He pointed out that any change of political or economic direction was seen as "irregular". Because of East-West rivalry, and the socialist-capitalist division, any change of alignment after independence was very difficult. In some cases such as Nkrumah's Ghana, and Sekou Toure's Guinea, attempts at a more radical policy were punished by boycotts and by cutting of important economic and political links. Such punitive moves had only led to increased relations with the socialist world.

In terms of trading relations, even in the mid 1970s, 60% of African trade was still with the EEC and inter-Africa trade was as slow as 20% of total African foreign trade. As a whole, it was clear that African national economies were still dependent on the capitalist economies of the West.

The speaker argued that African trade with socialist countries should be seen as part of the normalisation of the economic relations of African states. Another new set of relations were the expanding South-South relations; these too, posed a threat to traditional North-South relations, and such new, emerging relations represented discontinuity in the existing international order.

In general diplomatic relations, in contrast with trade relations, showed fewer signs of the colonial heritage. 50% of all diplomatic relations were with the developing countries. Most of these were with other African countries. States which were attempting to adopt "some sort of anti-domination policy" had more balanced relations between the East and the West than so-called moderate or "conservative" states. Also, "radical" African states tended to have a far higher percentage of bilateral relations than the so-called moderate states. This reflected their stronger mutual support compared with other African states.

On the topic of military connections and arms sales to Africa, Jyrki Käkönen argued that military relations were an aspect of dependence, and he pointed out that the French were most active here. In terms of arms sales, since the late 1970s, the USSR had been the most active in Africa, although arms sales to the continent were not widely distributed, and 80% of all arms sales had been concentrated in eight countries.

The speaker's basic point was the posing of the question, do we see "continuity", ie the old relations of dependence or permanent change as the normal situation for African international relations?

3.4.2 Jyrki Käkönen's second paper, Local and international conflicts in Africa, focused on the link, in his view, between conflicts in Africa and the existence of strategic raw materials. This was the case in what he called "the second conflict period" ie 1969-77. He cited the cases of the conflict of Western Sahara, Biafra, Shaba (in Zaire), Angola and Namibia as examples of the link between conflicts and the West's interests in Africa's raw materials. He also stated that the African "conflict potential" provided an opportunity for covert control of the continent by non-African powers. This was particularly likely to be the case if Western raw material interests were threatened.

3.4.3 Two other papers emphasised the dependency aspect of relations between African countries and the industrialised nations. Timo Kullonen, in his discussion paper Development discourse pointed out - as David Marsden had done - that the "developed" countries had to be sure they understood their own ecologies and their own interests before so confidently marketing ecologically sound alternatives to "developing" countries.

Tuomo Melasuo's paper on Economic relations between Europe and Africa emphasised the profound and long-term effect of Nineteenth Century European colonial economic interests. These reshaped the economic structures of African colonies and ensured that the main output of the colonies was in the service of the governing colonial economy.

In the post-colonial period, political independence had not led to economic independence. Overall, economic relations had remained unchanged. Economic relations with countries of the European Economic Community were regulated through the Lome Conventions, 1 and 2, the terms for the Third Lome Convention were being currently negotiated and were due to be signed in March 1985. The speaker also considered that items such as the question of migrant workers in Europe, and of development co-operation were still strong economic issues which usually gave the initiative to European rather than African countries.

3.4.4 Natural resources as reflected in the social and economic problems of African states Paavo Talman

Mineral and power resources which could create the basis for industrial development in tropical Africa were present but unevenly distributed, Professor Talman stated. He pointed out that tropical Africa was a producer of many of the key strategic minerals traded in the world and then proceeded to give the position regarding several basic resources: only 3.6% of world production of iron ore was in Africa, which had to import most of the iron that it needed for iron and steel production; minerals which were found were copper in Zambia and in the Shaba fields of Zaire; bauxite in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana; tin in the Shaba fields; manganese (an important mineral used to harden steel) in Gabon and Ghana; cobalt (used as an alloy in steel industries) in Zaire and Zambia; diamonds, Zaire which produced one quarter of all the world's diamonds in 1980, Ghana and Angola; gold, Zimbabwe and Ghana; coal, a little is mined in Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Zaire and Mauretania and petroleum in Nigeria, Gabon and Angola.

Turning to natural resources, Paavo Talman mentioned Nigeria as the largest producer and exporter of crude oil. The oil crisis of the early 1970s, together with the total lack of petroleum resources in many of the less developed African countries, had made it very difficult for them to develop their industries. A result of the oil crisis had been an enormous rise of foreign debts for these countries, in some cases it was as high as half the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per year.

Tropical Africa had about 37% of the world potential of hydro-electric power, Zaire alone having 12%, but because such power was very expensive to install, the actual installed capacity of hydro-electric plants was only 1% of its potential. In countries where resources such as oil and copper were a source of government revenue and foreign exchange, the impact on employment could still be low. For instance, the oil boom in Nigeria had not made much impact on employment, although in 1973 oil accounted for 35% of the GDP; in Zambia the copper mining industry accounted for only 14% of employment, although in 1980 copper accounted for 86% of the value of exports.

There was potential for industrialisation through the processing of raw materials and through the development of industry utilising such processed products. Finally, Professor Talman concluded that the exploitation of minerals had been primarily in the interests of the developed world. These interests were not necessarily the same as those of the producing world. It was essential to achieve a balance between consumer demands, and the development needs and objectives of the countries of tropical Africa.

4. THE DISCUSSIONS IN THE WORKING GROUPS

The three working groups covered the topics of A) History B) Culture and C) Ecology. Each group session took the form of a lead paper and then discussion and debate around the points raised in the paper. Groups kept in mind the need for a balance between content, and the question of how to use and communicate ideas and knowledge of Africa with maximum effect in the classroom. In the case of each group, the opening paper for discussion was given by the Group Chairperson.

Group rapporteurs gave their presentations towards the end of the Seminar, in what was a very lively session. Considerable use was made of visual materials in the form of diagrams, point summaries and so on. The high level of interest in the rapporteurs' presentation reflected the concern participants felt about effective classroom presentation and application.

4.1 GROUP A: THE HISTORICAL APPROACH

Chairperson: Sirkka Ahonen

Rapporteur: Vivien MacIver

This report covered work on the topics a) How should we approach African history and how should we teach African history and b) Racism with particular reference to apartheid in South Africa.

On Topic A:

After Sirkka Ahonen's introductory paper, Seven myths about teaching African history, we considered the following points:

1. Are we proposing to teach 1) The history of Africa? Or 2) are we teaching about Africa and especially considering the historical dimensions within this? Or 3) are we teaching history concentrating on Africa? The group felt that either 2) or 3) would be the best approach to adopt.

2. A search for a new approach. This means abandoning the competitive idea, ie "Anything you can do, Africa can do better" (looking for a "glorious" past, ancient empires and so on). Concentrate instead on people and the interdependence of people.

3. One possible approach could be through the skills based approach. That is: provide students with the "tools" of history. With these skills, the student can, with guidance, work on a range of topics or aspects of history. Some of the necessary skills are: 1) Information finding skills 2) Nature and evaluation of evidence 3) Developing empathy 4) Appreciation of change and continuity through time.

4. We decided to take a theme relating closely to people, a social theme (NOT the "big Empire" approach). An example of a theme is "Bringing up a Child".

5. A discussion of certain pitfalls and dangers to avoid in teaching African history.

   a. We must resist the tendency to replace one form of imbalance with another, ie do not imply that the Europeans brought nothing of value.

b. We must be careful that the themes did not just highlight the advantages of western technology.

c. Concentrate on "difference" rather than "better" or "worse".

d. Concentrate not on "good" or "bad", but on "how it worked" and decide on the criteria you will use for judging.

On Topic B:

We concentrated on:

1. The background causes;

2. Who accepts apartheid?

3. Where is apartheid going?

4. Applications to teaching.

As regards applications to teaching, we felt it was important that students related racism to themselves. We discussed taking racism as a theme and using other examples apart from the South African one. Everyone felt that the connections with the West, and Western perpetuation of apartheid through trading links made apartheid an essential topic for study. Students should be encouraged to examine their own attitudes and consider what they themselves could do about apartheid. Complementary approaches could be through a study of resistance history, and there would be a place as a teaching method, for drama and role play.

4.2 GROUP B: THE CULTURAL APPROACH

Chairperson: Sonja Servomaa

Rapporteur: Kenneth Rundell

First of all, Dr. Servomaa introduced her working paper, The cultural approach to teaching and research, in which she stressed the link between culture and a people's values. Also she spoke of the African conception of harmony as it was expressed in masks and sculptures, and the purity and rigour of design of such works. Another aspect of culture was the store of oral literature in African societies. Although some of this unwritten literature had disappeared, much was still alive and even flourishing because modern recording techniques could capture and reproduce "the power of the word". At the heart of the African approach, she saw the insistence that "the dignity and force of man lies in his capacity to give meaning to things".

The Group then worked on the topics a) How should culture in Africa be approached, and how should it be taught? This was followed by a case study of agriculture in East Africa. Topic b) was on "Tribe and national society" the subject of the paper given by Kolawole Raheem. Here we discussed the difficulties and advantages of a plurality of ethnic groups and differing cultures within a single national society, such as Nigeria.

On Topic A:

1. What do we mean by Africa's culture? The culture of yesterday or of today? Africa's traditional culture has been largely a rural or village culture with a stong emphasis on the family. An urban culture is a comparatively modern development and is bringing massive changes to African society.

We should emphasise that, with regard to the arts, these are intimately bound up with the philosophy and world view of a particular people, and with daily life, with birth, maturity, death, with marriage, harvesting, fertility.

We suggest that culture in Africa is taught through case studies of particular societies, such as the Gikuyu in East Africa and the Yoruba in West Africa. We must also take note of the varying art forms of the different regions and the views of life expressed through such art forms. Also, the emphasis should be on a dynamic rather than a static view of societies. We must link culture and change.

Look for parallels with cultural developments in our own societies. For instance, Western popular music has been influenced by African music; point out the links between the abstract forms of African sculpture and movements such as Cubism and Post-Impressionism in Western art.

The case study of agriculture in East Africa focused on a family farming fifteen acres in the Meru district of Mount Kenya. The family case study showed the changing pattern of agriculture brought through the colonial era. People had moved from growing food for their own needs to growing cash crops, often linked to overseas economic interests. The point was made that such change has been widespread in recent times in Europe (for example in Italy and Finland) as well as in Africa. The group pointed out that such a case study gave teachers opportunities to point out the similarities and the differences between various parts of Africa.

On Topic B:

In discussing the question of "Tribe and national society", we noted the following points: Africa contains many different ethnic groups, as does Europe. A member cited the case of Italy, which one hundred years ago was composed of different groups who spoke different languages and used different currencies.

We should try to find a word, such as "people" or "ethnic group" to use instead of "tribe" which in English had pejorative and prejudiced associations.

We need to remember that ethnic divisions in Africa may sometimes cause conflicts, but they also enhance the diversity and richness of African cultures.

We should remember that there is class conflict in Africa as well as conflict between ethnic groups.

4.3 GROUP C: THE ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

Chairperson: Ritva Kivikkokangas-Sandgren

Rapporteurs: Jim Dunlop and Irene Brightmer

The Group heard three papers and worked on points arising from them. (The papers by Assefa Kuru and Paavo Talman are summarised in 3.3 and 3.4 respectively). The report covered discussion of the papers on the Sahel (see 3.3), African natural resources (see 3.4) and the paper on historical, cultural and ecological approaches by Ms Kivikkokangas-Sandgren.

The Group then addressed itself to two questions:

1. How should Africa's history/culture/ecology be approached?

2. How should these be taught?

1. The best approach?

Group members saw the following as constraints on their own ability to approach and teach these topics:

- A lack of familiarity with the ecology of Africa south of the Sahara;

- African history as conveyed to them had been Eurocentric. Also the stress on "leaders" and "heros" had ignored both the role of "ordinary people" and the way in which ecological processes affected daily life;

- Media coverage of Africa invariably focused on the negative, the dramatic or the sensational.

2. Ways of effectively teaching about African cultures and environments

- It is best to provide material that appeals both cognitively and affectively. For instance, in dealing with the Sahel, combine studies of "Desertification of the Sahel", "Case studies of village life", with, "How Sahelian people respond to their environment", "How would you feel if you were a Sahelian villager/nomad?";

- Where possible try to get access to those who have first hand experience of a particular environment, and tap their expertise;

- Try to show children the complex web of relationships between the physical, biological and social environments;

- Show that the extension of "advanced" Northern technology is not likely to produce solutions to the problems of areas like the Sahel; nor is the application of charity or aid such as food aid. The causes of particular problems must be understood;

- Give greater emphasis to intermediate/appropriate technology; find ways of combining the best of African and Western technologies in the search for improved and sustained food production.

Possibilities for teaching about the Sahel

1. Use a multi-disciplinary approach.

   Take material from:

Art	History
Science	Music

2. Take a special approach through a village study:

   a. How were things in the past?

   b. The present: has the situation improved or worsened?

   c. The future - is there a future?

3. Suggested activity in school: introduce an Africa Day or Sahel Day.

   Include:

Dress	
Music	Customs
Food	Work
Crops	Schooling

5. PARTICIPANTS' REACTIONS TO THE SEMINAR

The following account was compiled from written reports and from discussion during the course of the Seminar.

The participants varied considerably in their knowledge of African affairs prior to attending the Seminar. Some were already contributing to work on international understanding in schools, and at in-service courses, in their own countries; some had worked in one or more than one African country and another had vigorously pursued his African interest through study tours of Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana. On the other hand, some participants had no first hand knowledge of Africa but wished to acquire expertise in order to enrich their own teaching, and also to influence educational policy concerning teaching about Africa intheir own countries.

Participants were full of praise for the Seminar on many counts. A number wrote appreciatively of the high standards of the lecturers, the wide range of material which the Seminar covered and the excellent overall structure of the Seminar.

On the point of communication techniques, the use of audio-visual material by some lecturers was mentioned approvingly, and in general participants felt that lecturers could have made even more use than they did of varied styles of presentation and communication. For instance, there could have been more use of slides, videos, the overhead projector, board work, question and answer with the audience, buzz groups and so on. A few participants also warned of the dangers - to communication - of lecturers reading lectures word for word with, "no eye contact, no humour, no body language"!

The mixture of lectures and group work was felt by most people to have worked very well. The question time at the end of lectures, which allowed for audience participation was considered invaluable. There were a few stern warnings to lecturers to avoid overshooting their allotted time and so doing away with participants' chance to "have their say" and sometimes also truncating the time allotted to the next lecturer, fidgeting nervously in the wings!

In some cases participants commented specifically on the new insights which the Seminar provided. For instance, the amount of prejudice still evident in textbook presentations of Africa, the strengths of village life and village people, and the lucid account of the Sahel region, were mentioned, among other topics presented, as being of particular interest.

Many participants stressed the value of group work in that it allowed for full discussion of points from general lectures, as well as from the papers given in the group sessions. Also the pedagogic aspect, namely, how best to apply one's knowledge, could be fully explored in group sessions. In fact, some participants would have liked more emphasis on content application in the overall structure of the Seminar. One fairly general criticism of the Seminar was that it was a little too tightly packed, and a little more free time in which one could think things over, read papers to be delivered the following day, take a quick nap, and so on, would 'ave been appreciated.

There was also the feeling that it was very necessary to spend time discussing pedagogical methods and the application of one's educational intentions, even though the curricula and syllabuses of various European countries were very different. One participant suggested, for future reference,

a two-part seminar with one element devoted to content, and a second, smaller one some months later, concentrating on curriculum design, classroom application, preparation of materials, methods of syllabus use of material on Africa, and so on. Another suggestion was the possibility of a thematic rather than a purely regional seminar, with themes such as "food production and distribution"; "the environment"; "energy problems".

Clearly, the Seminar generated a great deal of enthusiasm among what was without doubt a very resourceful and highly competent group of European teachers. The site and the regional location of the Seminar were also much appreciated. Participants were most enthusiastic about the interesting and enjoyable opportunities for experiencing something of Finnish life and culture which were included in the Seminar. For some of us, "the sauna" with its accompanying swim in Lake Vesijärvi was a particularly exhilarating experience! Also, without exception, participants praised the organisational skill and the warm and generous hospitality of our Finnish hosts. They also expressed their gratitude to the Council of Europe for initiating the Seminar.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, the Seminar members were eager to create maximum educational use of the insights they had gained on "Teaching about Africa south of the Sahara". In the final plenary session, they, therefore, agreed on the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATIONS BY PARTICIPANTS AT THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE SEMINAR ON TEACHING ABOUT AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA, HELD AT LAHTI, FINLAND 5-10 AUGUST 1984

This Seminar recommends that every effort should be made in member states to increase children's awareness of African lands and peoples and to dispel the myths and the stereotypes about African life. The aim is to redress the imbalance in many current approaches to Africa.

The above objectives could be achieved by means of a review of the following:

- the curriculum;
- exams;
- teacher education;
- in-service training;
- textbooks;
- other teaching resources.

The following institutions and people are involved in school education and could be approached in trying to bring about change:

- the national authorities for education;
- local authorities;
- colleges and universities involved in teacher education;
- teachers' organisations such as teachers' unions and subject associations;
- students' associations;
- libraries and resource centres;
- publishers of school material;
- authors of school material;
- educational broadcasting;
- international organisations working in the field of education such as UNESCO, Council of Europe (CDCC), and the Nordic Council.

The Seminar has produced three reports on how to approach and teach the history, culture and ecology of Africa.

We suggest also that a core of topics about Africa should be taught in all member states, for example, apartheid, desertification and the problems of agriculture, industrialisation, the experience of peasants and workers, social and cultural change, and finally, Africa in the international system.

Participants requested that these recommendations be sent to the Council of Europe and the relevant ministries of the member states, to international educational organisations such as UNESCO, and to key educational organisations within member states. Participants also requested that a copy of the recommendations be sent to each of them for use at the local level.

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APPENDIX B

CENTRES PROVIDING RESOURCES ON AFRICA

CEVNO, Centre for International Education; about 30 publications on Third World questions mostly to do with Africa. (Seminar participant, Wolter Blankert.)

Centre for International Studies, Exmouth, Devon EX8 2AT, Tel: 0395-26492; focuses on the formal education sector from infant to teacher education, including Adult Education; its range of activities include research, curriculum development, consultancy, resource production, course provision. (Seminar participant, Roger Morgan.)

Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research; Textbook Centre for the Council of Europe, organises expert meetings, publishes a journal and monographs and has a comprehensive International Textbook Library which students and teachers may use. (Seminar participant, Elfriede Hillers.)

Jordanhill College of Education, Glasgow G13 18P, United Kingdom, Tel: (0)41-959-1232; Seminar participant, James Dunlop directs the Jordanhill Project in International Understanding; he is also co-ordinator of the International Multi-cultural Education Programme (IMEP), Scotland, and editor of the IMEP Newsletter is Connect.

Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Box 2126, 75002, Uppsala, Sweden; its library stocks a range of material on social, economic and political aspects of Africa, books by African writers and a number of journals and magazines specialising in African news and commentary. (Seminar participant, Mai Palmberg.)

Other information

Professor Terence Ranger is on the editorial boards of Past and Present, History Workshop and Journal of Southern African Studies, in any of which contributions on how to approach and teach African history could appear.

The African Studies Association (UK), Secretary, Dr. Deborah Gaitskell, 18 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 58J, holds an annual conference and publishes a journal and newsletter.

The Association for the Teaching of Caribbean, African and Asian Literatures, Secretary, Ms Vicky Unwin, 22 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HH, holds an annual conference and publishes a journal and newsletter.